Cacophony

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Summary

Jack finds Will in Hannibal's office and confronts him. (Part 3 of an ongoing series).

Jack heard the steady thump-thump-thump in his office as the picture frames rattled on the wall. He knew exactly who the culprit was.

Dr. Hannibal Fucking Lecter.

The department's resident academic shit disturber. He grabbed his almost empty bottle of extra strength Tylenol and swallowed two pills with a gulp of cold coffee. Hannibal was more often than not the cause of Jack's regular migraines and excessive paperwork.

"Pompous ass,"Jack muttered. "Why couldn't he stick to writing his regular passive aggressive memos this week? At least they're quiet."

He got up from his desk and sighed. If Jack didn't nip this in the bud now, the phone calls from the other floors would start soon. He stormed down the hallway and pounded on Hannibal's door.

"Shut that infernal racket off, Hannibal, or I swear I will-" Jack slammed open the office door, then stood in the threshold.

Instead of Hannibal, like he expected, he instead found Will sitting in Hannibal's leather chair. Will's head was tilted back and his eyes were closed, with his feet on Hannibal's desk. Some sort of classical music was blaring over Hannibal's sound system and Will was seemingly lost in the music. Jack trudged across the office, stabbing the power button off and plunged the office into silence.

"Hey," Will said with his eyes still closed. "I was listening to that."

"What in the hell are you doing in here?"

"I just said I was listening to-"

"Shut up," Jack snapped. "Hannibal will kill you if he finds out you were in here and that your feet are on his desk."

Will smirked and flicked his name tag. "Just cleaning, sir. It's my specialty."

"You're off shift. Unauthorized use of a tenured prof's office? You stupid-"

"Authorized," Will said and opened his eyes.

"Excuse me?"

"Authorized use. I have permission to be here from Dr. Lecter."

"Like hell you do."

Jack was expecting Will to back down and glare at his boots or start a rambling swear tirade. Will's gaze flicked up to meet Jack's own gaze head on.

"Ask him," he challenged.

"There is no way that Hannibal Lecter gave you permission to be alone in his office blasting that crap."

"Not only did give me permission, but he ordered me to do it," Will said. "Maybe not with my feet on his desk, but I'm gaining an appreciation for the classics."

"Bullshit." Jack slammed his hand flat on the desk.

"George Philipp Telemann, if you want to be specific. I'm growing fond of the German composers, while Dr. Lecter favours the Italians. And, you can't say he doesn't crank the volume, because it was already pre-set. We both know be does it as a form of psychological warfare against Dr. Werner since he voted against Hannibal's motion at the last departmental council and Werner hates anything except contemporary jazz. By the way, I am completely aware and disgusted by how pretentious this entire argument is."

Jack blinked and sighed. "You've been spending far too much time with Hannibal and that's the problem."

"Not a problem... an education. My education. Besides, you're the one who encouraged to me to sit in on his class in the first place."

"His class. Not become joined at the hip. Little did I know-"

"If you're done yelling at me, you may go now."

"Definitely too much time with Hannibal," Jack grumbled and moved forward to knock Will's feed from the desk. "I may go now? Oh, hell no. You don't tell me what to do."

That rattled Will's bravado. Will's gaze dropped to Hannibal's ink blotter.

"You're playing a dangerous game, Will."

"I'm not interested in what you have to say."

"Dr. Bloom came to see me."

Jack waited for a reaction and saw Will's expression darken.

"Will, stay away from Hannibal," Jack demanded.

"No."

"This isn't a choice."

"You have no right to demand anything from me or Hannibal. We're both adults."

"Stay away from him or-"

"Or what, Jack? You'll take away my custodian job? I can quit."

Jack decided to try another tactic. "You're selfish only thinking of yourself. I wonder what Hannibal's peers would think of a man cheating on his respected partner with someone significantly younger than him?"

"I'm twenty-three. And, it's not cheating. Hannibal said-"

"They're a thing. You and Hannibal are some sort of weird thing... two things at the same time make one of them cheating." Jack pinched the bridge of his nose with his head throbbing. "This is an absurd conversation. Are you even gay?"

"What I am is no matter to you."

"It matters to me. Have you thought about what this will do to Hannibal?" Jack asked. "People would talk if they knew Hannibal was taking advantage of a younger... economically disadvantaged and socially challenged individual."

Will's fingers curled into fists and he gritted his teeth. "I'm not-"

"You are," Jack cut him off. "Whether you like or not, you are vulnerable. Hannibal's taking advantage of that."

"How do you know I'm not taking advantage of him?"

Jack barked out a laugh. "No one takes advantage of Hannibal. He'll chew you up and spit you up. I'd rather stop this now before it gets out of hand. I'll report him myself if I have to."

"You wouldn't." Will's shoulders slumped and his gaze was still downcast.

"Wouldn't I?"

A heavy silence hung in the air.

"Nothing's happened," Will said, his tone low.

"Excuse me?"

"Nothing. Happened."

"Don't lie to me, Will. I won't abide it."

"I'm white trash and I know it, Jack," Will said. "I never pretended to be anything other than what I am. Hannibal won't lower himself to fuck around with the likes of me."

"Will..."

"Don't tell me not to swear," Will snapped. "Hannibal's bad enough."

"Stop lying to me."

"I'm not," Will insisted. "He's demanded that if I want his mentorship to continue, I'll have to secure my high school diploma by Christmas. We talk. Nothing else."

"Nothing else?"

"Fine," Will sighed. "He cooks for me. He lectures me. We talk. Listen to music. He likes an audience. That's it."

"He broke up with Alana."

"Also, none of your business."

"She said you're living with him," Jack said.

"I was sleeping in an abandoned car before that. I'm not picky."

Jack crossed his arms over his chest. "You're not denying it."

"He has a guest house."

"Of course he does. And?"

"I have a dog. He won't let her in the main house. He said I can stay in the guest house until I get on my feet."

"Likely story," Jack said. "You're better than this lie. You're better than being someone's boy toy and dirty little secret."

"He's not ashamed of me," Will said. His fingers were curling and uncurling into a fist. "He said you would say something like that. He also said to ignore and I quote, 'There is nothing unseemly with our acquaintance.'"

"Now, that does sound like Hannibal. You've got daddy issues as wide as the Grand Canyon. You're projecting-"

"Shut up," Will snapped. "You've got no right to talk about my father."

Jack shook his head. "Maybe not a right, but a responsibility to."

"I've got a roof over my head for the first time in years and good... no, great food to eat. So, my life isn't so bad." Will stopped to take a breath through gritted teeth. "You judge me. You always have. He doesn't judge me."

"You're not his equal."

Will nodded curtly. "Not now. He told me that, too, but he sees potential. He see the real me and wants me to become my true self."

"This is my last warning. Stop."

"I quit," Will snapped. "Take your broom and shove it."

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